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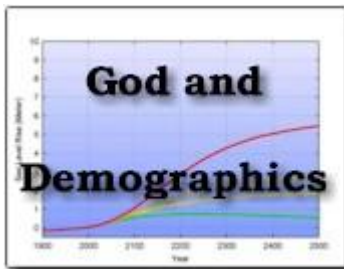
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God and Demographics

by David Sielaff, August 2015

Read the accompanying [Newsletter for August 2015](#)



“Demographics” is a plural noun dealing with statistical data of human populations. God controls every aspect of His children from Adam — individuals, families, clans, tribes, kingdoms, and nations, throughout history. God decreased the human population to just 8 people who survived the flood. All others died (Genesis 7:22). At Christ’s return most people on earth will be killed in a series of worldwide judgments from God. This article discusses demographic trends of history, of the present, and of the future just before God’s judgments begin.

Although we cannot be certain, the population before the flood of Noah apparently grew at a steady rate. Since the flood, particularly after the confusion of languages and dispersion of mankind at Babel,¹ the number of Adam’s children has seen great increases and decreases. Some were victims of genocide, eliminating entire peoples. Other ethnic groups ceased to exist when they assimilated into other peoples. Some fled or were driven to less desirable places at extreme edges of the world, and for a time became isolated from the rest of mankind — all beginning from the Middle East (Genesis 10:25, 32, 11:4, 8–9). Empires rose and fell, with wars, famines, and pestilences. Some famines and pestilences were worldwide in scope. For example, the last great influenza pandemic of 1918–1919 was worldwide and very dangerous:

“No one knows exactly how many people died during the 1918–1919 influenza pandemic. During the 1920s, researchers estimated that 21.5 million people died ... More recent estimates have estimated global mortality from the 1918–1919 pandemic at anywhere between 30 and 50 million. An estimated 675,000 Americans were among the dead.”

• [The Legacy of the Pandemic](#)²

¹ Genesis 11:1–9. The incident at Babel apparently occurred during the time of life of Peleg, whose name means “divide” or “distribute,” “for in his days was the earth divided” (Genesis 10:25), and “in his days the earth was divided” (1 Chronicles 1:19). The Hebrew is identical in the two verses. See my July 16, 2015 Commentary, “[Thoughts about Babel](#).”

² Referenced July 6, 2015 from the general website www.flu.gov published by the United States Department of Health and Human Services. The specific topic webpage is “[The Great Pandemic, the United States in 1918–1919](#).”

Population Increase

In a 1914 article, "[Population Estimates for the Countries of the World from 1914 to 1920](#)," author Mark Jefferson calculated that the world population in 1914 was 1.7 billion people.³ Only one hundred years later the world population is 7+ billion, more than 4 times (400%+) the 1914 population. If a plague was to occur with a similar percentage of fatalities as the 1918 flu outbreak, this would mean 120 to 200 million people would die worldwide in one year, and 2.7 million would die in the United States alone. Of course, such equivalencies are solely for illustration. Nevertheless, worldwide plagues and famines were predicted by Christ (Matthew 24:7; Luke 21:11) and they will occur. Dr. Ernest Martin's 1994 article, "[Disease Epidemics and Bible Prophecy](#)" presents excellent background information to Jesus' prophecies.

God and Demographics, Who Cares?

God cares, and He cares a great deal. You should care because **every human being who ever lived, every person who is alive today, or ever shall live, will eventually be a brother or a sister of yours in Christ.** Eventually you will know each of those individuals better than you know anyone at this moment. You will also know God the Father and Jesus Christ better than you know anyone now.

Regardless of how you feel about your life at this moment, you are not alone (even if you "feel" abandoned or alone). God and Christ are with you now, caring for you, nurturing you in ways you cannot realize or understand. You will not be alone in the future.

Does an infant have any concept of all the parents do for him or her? No. Likewise, we cannot know now all that God the Father and Christ are doing for us: feeding us, clothing us, protecting us, and preparing us in a myriad of ways so we can inherit God's Kingdom. We shall someday know and understand all that God the Father and Christ have done to nurture us (Isaiah 64:4; 1 Corinthians 2:9, 3:1; 1 Peter 1:12). You are a child of God now (Galatians 4:28; 1 John 3:1, 5:1), being fed spiritual milk:

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby: If so be you have tasted that the Lord is gracious."

• **1 Peter 2:2-3**

Our goal is to grow, ingesting increasingly mature spiritual food. With the guidance of the Father and Christ, we **"grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ"** (2 Peter 3:18). They nurture us to teach us about themselves. Even angels are designated to minister to us, even though we may never realize it. Writing about angels, **"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"** (Hebrews 1:14).

"Beloved, now are we children of God, and it was not as yet manifested what we shall be. We are aware that, if He should be manifested, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him according as He is."

• **1 John 3:2, Concordant Literal Version**

To be sure, these facts somewhat boggle the mind. Our being nurtured seems incomprehensible to us in our current limited ability to deal with problems in our lives. So, who cares about such things as populations of mankind? God cares about the habitations, the travels, and the amount of time people live in one place (Acts 17:26-27).

As soon as God created Adam, he said that man should be fruitful and multiply:

"And God said, 'Let us make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness: and let them have domin-

³ *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society*, Vol. 46, No. 6 (1914), pp. 401-413. His world population figure, on p. 413, was 1.669 billion. Jefferson's data has been confirmed and accepted by other researchers because of subsequent verifiable birth data.

ion ... over all the earth, ...'

So God created man in his OWN image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, 'Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.'"

• **Genesis 1:26–28**

A major characteristic of God's image is its intimate involvement with creativity — God as Creator. God is a Creator. While this seems obvious, think carefully on the importance of this understanding. Dr. Martin used to say, **"God is not in the salvation business, God is in the creation business."** This is exactly correct. God is not struggling to "save" a few people from the billions born since Adam and Eve. These are people created in His own image and likeness.⁴

In fact, **"... the earth has he given to the children of men [adam]"** (Psalm 115:16). With 7 billion people on earth at this moment, mankind is fulfilling God's mandate, fulfilling God's imperative command. After Adam and Eve, mankind was fruitful, multiplied, and increased. Evil caused God to bring forth the flood, killing all but eight people. Then from the wives of Shem, Japheth, and Ham came all of the 7 billion people alive today, and the billions who died before today.

Population Increase

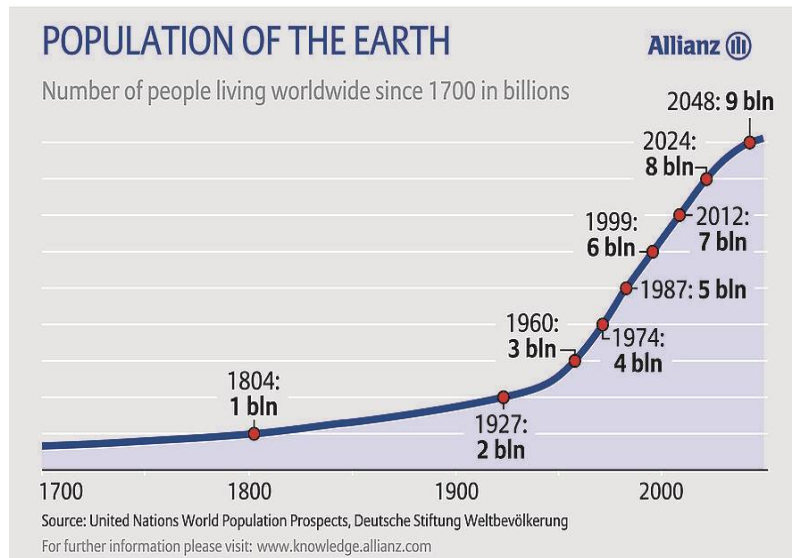
Populations grow when life expectancy and prosperity increase. Life expectancy of a population is a combination of infant, child and adult mortality rates. A decrease in infant mortality greatly increases life expectancy rate because an increasing percentage of surviving infants are more likely to grow up to have children of their own. Prosperity allows people to eat better and live in better conditions than in the past.

After relatively long periods of prosperity begin, people continue to have several children as their parents did. This is because life expectancy remains low,⁵ lagging behind the economic upturn. When people begin to live longer and lives improve, the

need for the next generation to have many children diminishes. This is happening now. People still desire to have children, but they tend to have fewer children. Societal and practical influences take time to have an effect.

The Bible tells us that too many people in a region can cause problems. Land can be overused due to human population growth. Remember that the animals and people of Abram and Lot were many:

"And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. ..."



⁴ Dr. Ernest Martin, "[The Bodily Composition of God](#)." That article explains why we have the body shape we human beings have. This is because we are patterned after God's body shape. Yes, **"God is [a] spirit"** (John 4:24, the indefinite article "a" is not in the Greek). As seemingly heretical as it seems, God the Father has a body composed of spirit, which in the spiritual realm has substance, just as our bodies have substance in our physical realm. The difference is that God is not limited in any way by His choice to represent Himself in a particular image and likeness. God is not a pulsating blob of thinking energy. Some think, "Oh, God is a spirit, therefore He cannot have a body." Where in Scripture is that stated?

⁵ In some periods of history, life expectancy ages ranged as low as the mid-30s.

And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents. And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together.”

• *Genesis 13:2, 5–6*

You know the rest of the story.⁶

Like a picture, a graph can tell a story. The graph on the prior page tells the story of Adam’s offspring since the year 1700 to the present and projected out to 2048. Records before 1800 or even 1850 are unreliable. Note that the population around 1914 would be about 1.6 billion, just as Jefferson calculated as shown earlier. Most analysts agree with him. Some 100 years later the population of the earth is about 7 billion. Note that the trajectory of population increase began in the early 1700s, rising to a quicker rate in the 1950s. The rate of increase in population of the 1800s and 1900s growth continues until recent years.

A new trend has begun in the population curve indicating a declining rate of population growth. The rate of increase is slowing. Dr. George Friedman, Stratfor.com founder explains:

“We are already facing the major demographic shift, which is the declining birthrate. In every group, in every ethnic group, in every region, the number of children being born to women is in decline. The world is undergoing a fundamental shift — the process that began 300 years ago of population explosion is coming to an end.”

The population is still growing of the world but at a diminishing rate. And by the end of the century [near the year 2098], you will have stable global population or even declining population. While today countries like Germany and Japan are already facing massive population busts, and over the next 20 years it’s going to be one of the major issues in the world.”

• *“Stratfor on Demography,” [Media Center, Video](#), October 1, 2012*

Of course, present trends can change but it is unlikely that societies around the world would suddenly begin to have large numbers of babies unless present trends improve significantly. People would need to feel secure and able to handle the increasing load of many children in a family.

This information is well known and Dr. Friedman explains the process in a February 17, 2015 article why the shift is occurring:

“There is no question but that the populations of most European countries will decline in the next generation, and in the cases of Germany and Russia, the decline will be dramatic. In fact, the entire global population explosion is ending. In virtually all societies, from the poorest to the wealthiest, the birthrate among women has been declining.

In order to maintain population stability, the birthrate must remain at 2.1 births per woman. Above that, and the population rises; below that, it falls.

- In the **advanced industrial world**, the birthrate is already substantially below 2.1.
- In **middle-tier countries** such as Mexico or Turkey, the birthrate is falling but will not reach 2.1 until between 2040 and 2050.
- In the **poorest countries**, such as Bangladesh or Bolivia, the birthrate is also falling, but it will take most of this century to reach 2.1.

The process is essentially irreversible. It is primarily a matter of urbanization.”

• *George Friedman, [“Population Decline ...”](#) with permission of Stratfor.com⁷*

⁶ Genesis chapter 13. Lot went to live in the valley and Abraham in the highlands. Lot was taken captive and rescued by Abraham (Genesis chapter 14). Lot later needed to be rescued again, that time by God (Genesis 19:6–19).

⁷ The full title of this Stratfor.com article is [“Population Decline and the Great Economic Reversal.”](#) Bullets and underlines for emphasis are mine.

For another perspective on changing populations, look at two lists of the world's most populated countries (on the next page), a current one for 2014 and the other projected for 36 years from now. By 2050, India will overtake China as the world's most populous country. This is due to China's nationally enforced rule of one child per couple.⁸ The United States may remain the 3rd most populous country or Nigeria in Africa may become more populated than the United States, more than doubling its current population in 34 years. Russia, Japan, and several European countries will decline in population, and some countries may cease to exist as political entities. This chart was published July 11, 2015:

Most Populous Countries, 2014 and 2050
(Source: Population Reference Bureau, [2014 World Population Sheet](#), p. 2)

2014		2050	
COUNTRY	POPULATION (MILLIONS)	COUNTRY	POPULATION (MILLIONS)
China	1,364	India	1,657
India	1,296	China	1,312
United States	318	Nigeria	396
Indonesia	251	United States	395
Brazil	203	Indonesia	365
Pakistan	194	Pakistan	348
Nigeria	177	Brazil	226
Bangladesh	158	Bangladesh	202
Russia	144	Congo, Dem. Rep.	194
Japan	127	Ethiopia	165

Future Decline in Population Increase

What causes the process of population decline? As an economy contributes to the growth of a thriving middle class, social conditions change for the better, but new problems arise. The status of children changes from their being a help to a family, to children becoming a burden. Again, George Friedman explains:

“In agricultural and low-level industrial societies, children are a productive asset. Children can be put to work at the age of 6 doing agricultural work or simple workshop labor. Children become a source of income, and the more you have the better. Just as important, since there is no retirement plan other than family in such societies, a large family can more easily support parents in old age.”

In a mature urban society, the economic value of children declines. In fact, children turn from instruments of production into objects of massive consumption. In urban industrial society, not only are the opportunities for employment at an early age diminished, but the educational requirements also expand dramatically.

Children need to be supported much longer, sometimes into their mid-20s [or even later]. Children cost a tremendous amount of money with limited return, if any, for parents. Thus, people have fewer children. Birth control merely provided the means for what was an economic necessity. For most people, a family of eight children would be a financial catastrophe. Therefore, women have two children or fewer, on average. As a result, the population contracts. Of course, there are other reasons for this decline, but urban industrialism is at the heart of it.”

• George Friedman, "[Population Decline ...](#)" with permission of Stratfor.com

⁸ Malcolm Moore, "[What is China's one-child policy?](#)" *The Telegraph* (October 2014) accessed 7/10/2015.

For the scenario Dr. Friedman describes, keep in mind that every country has unique societal, governmental, social, religious, and traditional inputs that modify the trajectory of the outcomes in different countries. But the results are remarkably the same.

God's Intention

What can we conclude from this information on population growth? First, God truly loves people, because He created so many of us, with each individual (each of us) created in His image and likeness. Remember, even though every human being since Eve is born through a natural developmental process leading to birth,⁹ each child of Adam is a distinctive creation of God with a personality — literally, each is a unique miracle of life. Each possesses a **“spirit of man,”** or better expressed as the Hebrew, the **“spirit of adam.”** Each one continues to take in the breath of life as a gift of God, just as every heartbeat occurs with God's permission for that heart to pump blood.

Job 12:10 (referring to God) says: **“In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.”** Your breath takes in air for its oxygen to be extracted by the lungs for circulation throughout your body.¹⁰ Each heartbeat distributes that oxygen to every cell in your body. These gifts of breath and heartbeat from God moment by moment sustain the soul, which is the unified composition of your body and the **“spirit of man,”** which is also a gift from God, sustained moment by moment (Genesis 2:7).

What happens at death, Qoheleth (Solomon) asks? **“Who knows the spirit of man that goes upward, and the spirit of the beast that goes downward to the earth?”** (Ecclesiastes 3:21). He answers his own question later; God knows; each spirit of every human being returns to Him at death: **“Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it”** (Ecclesiastes 12:7).

Besides energizing the body and forming the soul, **“The spirit of man is the candle of YHWH, searching all the inward parts of the belly”** (Proverbs 20:27). The prophet Jeremiah wrote:

“The burden of the word of YHWH for Israel, says YHWH, which stretches forth the heavens, and lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him.”

• **Zechariah 12:1**

The apostle Paul would agree with all the foregoing:

“For what man knows the things of a man, save [except by] the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God know no man, but the Spirit of God.”

• **1 Corinthians 2:11**

Be Fruitful and Multiply

What God has wrought in the billions of persons alive today should not be considered a population “explosion.” Rather there is a population “blossoming” as we approach the days before Christ's return. This effusion of human beings is what God wants to happen. In fact, the result of mankind being fruitful and multiplying results from God's specific blessing.

God first gives His blessing and then says **“be fruitful and multiply [increase],”** every time that phrase is spoken. He says it first to the fish and birds in Genesis 1:22 and 8:17. Then God says the same phrase to mankind,¹¹ as author E. Calvin Beisner notes:

⁹ Jesus' birth was unique. See Chapter 6, **“Our Sins Are Imputed to Christ”** of Dr. Martin's book [Essentials of New Testament Doctrine](#).

¹⁰ A human soul is not created until the first breath fills the lungs. See my February 1, 2005 Commentary, **“Abortions and Miracles”** and Dr. Martin's 1991 article **“Abortion and the Bible.”** Once that soul is created, that person shall be saved. It is the will of God that it be so (1 Timothy 2:4).

¹¹ God blesses the man and the woman, followed by an imperative command to **“be fruitful and multiply”** in Genesis 1:28, 9:1, 7. This applies to every human being then, now, and in the future. Then to Abraham and his descendants God makes promises to further increase offspring as part of God's blessing and their adherence to their covenant with God. God's people were given the

“God’s original intention, then was for man to increase in numbers and fill the earth (Genesis 1:28). That intention was renewed in the covenant with Noah (Genesis 9:1, 7), and again with Abraham (Genesis 17:2) and Isaac (Genesis 26:4, 24), then with the nation of Israel (Deuteronomy 7:13). Then it was renewed with all believers (Hosea 1:10; Romans 9:26).

And in the NT, the apostle Paul tells us that ‘from one man he [God] made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they live’ (Acts 17:26, emphasis added). Clearly the Bible envisions, as part of God’s purpose, a tremendous population spread over the globe.”

• *Beisner’s, “Imago Dei,” p. 183*¹²

A growing population is also as a good thing, a blessing for Gentile nations as well as for Israel (Psalms 127:3–5, 128:1, 3; Proverbs 14:28). The earth was designed to be inhabited by children of Adam, and He wants His creation to bear fruit and multiply:

“For thus says YHWH that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he has established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am YHWH; and there is none else.”

• *Isaiah 45:18*

The vast majority of the world’s population is not Israelite (the Jews today). They are Gentiles. Is this disparity between the number of Gentiles and Israelites what Jesus meant by, **“the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled”** (Luke 21:24)? Or, what about the verse regarding **“the fulness of the Gentiles?”** (Romans 11:25)? The Luke 21:24 passage refers to the times during which Gentiles are the leading peoples of the world, whereas after Christ returns Israel shall lead the world. Romans 11:25 refers to the full complement of Gentile believers before Christ returns, not the number of Gentiles in the world.

There are an estimated 13–14 million Jews in the current world population of 7+ billion. The vast majority of Jews are roughly equally divided between Israel and the United States, plus other smaller numbers of Jews scattered around the world (minus those who say they are Jews but are not, Revelation 2:9, 3:9). Therefore, Jews comprise 2/1000th, or .2% (that is 2/10^{ths} of 1%) of the world’s population. That is a tiny amount. For the 13–14 million figure, see **“Jewish Population”** in “Judaism 101” website. Other Jewish websites give a similar figure.

How Did We Get So Many People?

Wherever people live, the environment today is less than pristine, but pollution is far less deadly than in the past. And, it is pollution of a different kind. There has always been pollution, especially in cities. I will cite selected quotes below from historian D.J. Boorstin’s 1970 article, “A Case of Hypochondria”¹³:

“We compare our smoggy air not with the odor of horse dung and the plague of flies and the smells of garbage and human excrement which filled cities in the past, but with the honey-suckle perfumes of some nonexistent City Beautiful.”

• *Boorstin, “Hypochondria,” 1970*

The horse dung, the flies, the garbage, and human excrement, most all of it had bacteria, viruses, and parasites producing more bacteria, viruses, and parasites. Not until the mid-1800s did the problem of sewage

great blessing of increase (Genesis 47:27; Deuteronomy 1:10, 10:22). God continued to bless Israel when they were obedient (Deuteronomy 7:13–14). Declining population was one curse God might impose on a rebellious Israel (Deuteronomy 28:62–63; Leviticus 26:22; Jeremiah 42:2, 5:6, 14:16, 15:3, 16:4; Ezekiel 14:15). Beisner, pp. 182–183.

¹² E. Calvin Beisner’s, “Imago Dei and the Population Debate,” *Trinity Journal* 18:2 (Fall 1997), p. 183, quoted from his book, *Prospects for Growth: A Biblical View of Population, Resources, and the Future* (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1990), pp. 50–52.

¹³ D.J. Boorstin, “A Case of Hypochondria,” *Newsweek* (July 6, 1970), p. 28, quoted in J.L. Simon, *The Economics of Population Growth* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), p. 499.

even begin to be addressed in any cities of the world. Luckily, most people lived in rural areas. In the cities, sewage and waste from humans and animals (mostly horses) ran down gutters in the streets to cesspools, some septic systems, lowlands, rivers, lakes, or oceans. Usually there was some thought to channel the waste to the middle of the street, but little thought was given to waste after that. Cities around the world were not particularly healthy places to live.

The first international urban planning conference did not occur until 1898, less than 120 years ago. Eric Morris wrote, **“One topic dominated the discussion. It was not housing, land use, economic development, or infrastructure. The delegates were driven to desperation by horse manure.”** Each horse produces between 15 to 30 pounds of manure per day and a quart of urine. In the late 1800s the number of horses in New York City nearly equaled the number of people, yet the horse was vital to the operation of society in New York and cities around the world.¹⁴ Do you still think it would be pleasant to live in “the good old days”?

In my October 16, 2013 Commentary **“Nasty, Brutish, and Short,”** I point out that Thomas Hobbes in 1651 described conditions of evil so that people are in **“continual fear, and danger of violent death; And the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.”** This is a true description of life after the flood through to the present day. It was likely also true for those living before the flood, except the lives of those people, were nasty, brutish and long. Why and how did conditions begin to improve, albeit ever so slowly?

Improved sanitation of all types was needed and invented: flush toilets and sewerage systems carrying waste to filtration locations began to be required by governments. Organized collection and removal of rubbish and waste, from where people live to landfills, was initiated. Strict requirements for burying the dead were mandated. Government over time does do some good basic functions. Boorstin continues:

“We forget that even if the water in many cities today is not as spring pure nor as palatable as we would like, for most of history the water of the cities (and of the countryside) was undrinkable.”

• **Boorstin, “Hypochondria,” 1970**

The water was not only undrinkable, it was unhealthy. A good water supply has always been vital for every community. When a water supply suddenly stopped (for example, by earthquake, diversion of a river, or a spring drying up), people leave those cities very quickly and go elsewhere. The Greeks and other ancient peoples built aqueducts to transport clean water to cities from mountains and hills. The Romans perfected aqueduct construction to an art. They built systems to bring water from as far as 50 miles to major cities of the Roman Empire. Then, in the case of the city of Rome, the pure mountain water was distributed to wealthy homes through lead pipes. The wealthy in Rome became unaccountably ill because of the leaching of lead from the pipes into the water they drank. Their wives had problems giving birth to healthy children, and older people developed symptoms of what we now identify as lead poisoning. Because the cause was not linked to the lead, the rich sought to move to country villas with wells.

As a reminder, the supply of water from the Gihon Spring made Jerusalem an ideal city in which to live. The Gihon “pumped” or “gushed” fresh spring water 40 stories to the top of the City of David for use by the people at the top and sides of the City of David, for washing, for irrigating, and for flushing waste away, down sloping to the Kidron, Tyropean, and Hinnom valleys. It was also the source supplying water to the Temple at the top of the hill on the City of David above the Gihon. The Gihon continued to supply water for the entire city of Jerusalem until Roman times when Pontius Pilate constructed an aqueduct to bring water from the south near Bethlehem to Jerusalem. He did so because the Temple used so much of the Gihon water for ritual purposes, especially on feast days, that there was not enough to supply the city.

“We reproach ourselves for the ills of disease and malnourishment, and forget that until recently enteritis [intestinal inflammation] and measles and whooping cough, diphtheria and

¹⁴ The problem of waste products from horses is discussed in the fascinating article by Eric Morris, **“From Horse Power to Horsepower,”** *Access*, No. 30, Spring 2007.

typhoid, were killing diseases of childhood, puerperal fever [postpartum infection, formerly called childhood fever] **plagued mothers in childbirth, polio was a summer monster.”**

• **Boorstin, “Hypochondria,” 1970, p. 28**

Here is a list of other reasons for improved longevity. Each example lends a slight additional cause for improved longevity:

- Access to better nutrition (fruits and vegetables shipped over distances) due to improved trade, transport and refrigeration.¹⁵
- Improved and simplified well-drilling techniques at the village level.
- Improved personal hygiene — people washing more often, particularly their hands.
- Improved antisepsis by doctors and hospitals — when doctors did not wash their hands or apply other meticulous antisepsis they spread infections from person to person. Antisepsis improved the survival rates from surgery.
- Improved hygienic maternal care for new mothers.
- Improved housing conditions — fewer people are confined in unhealthy housing conditions.
- Safer travel — mass transit, car and truck safety is constantly being improved for economic reasons.
- Better working conditions — shorter working hours, more rest-time, laws and regulations that reduced health hazards. Safer working conditions = good business.

The results of successful improvements can be quantified (one useful function of the United Nations), published, and compared.

“The most important difference between the world today and 150 years ago isn’t airplane flight or nuclear weapons or the Internet. It’s lifespan. We used to live 35 or 40 years on average in the United States, but now we live almost 80. We used to get one life. Now we get two.”

• **Laura Helmuth, “[Why Are You Not Dead Yet?](#)”**

Some health problems of the past could have killed you in an earlier era. **“Life was miserable — full of contagious disease, spoiled food, malnutrition, exposure, and injuries. Disease was the worst. The vast majority of deaths before the mid-20th century were caused by microbes”** (Helmuth). Gradually, however:

“Worldwide trends in human life expectancy are, almost without exception, positive, and they have been throughout the roughly two hundred years since industrialization and modernization began. Around the mid-seventeenth century, life expectancy at birth everywhere in the world was about the same — somewhere in the late twenties.

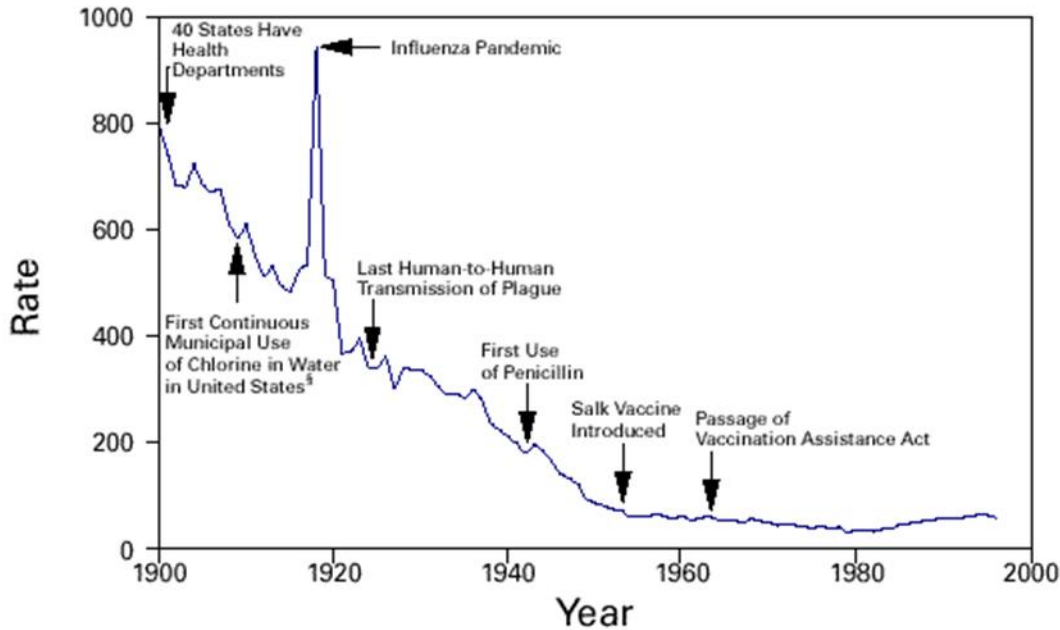
Today it is 66 years old worldwide, 62 years in low-income economies (66 in China and India, 55 in other low-income economies, 68 in middle-income economies, and 77 in high-income economies). The upward trend in life expectancy shows no sign of slowing.”

• **Beisner, *Imago Dei*, p. 184**

¹⁵ Biblical laws regarding clean and unclean foods were specifically for those adhering to the rituals of the Mosaic Law. They were not designed for health, though they have that effect given the relative quality, source, and benefit of the clean/unclean foods. The apostle Paul understood this and explained it in 1 Corinthians chapter 8, 10:19, 28, nuancing the instructions to Gentiles from the Jerusalem *ekklesia* in Acts 15:29, 21:25. Paul told the Gentiles to act with knowledge in regard to their conscience and the conscience of fellow believers around them who may not understand their freedom in Christ. The advice Paul gives in Colossians 2:16 is crucial, **“Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink”**

With the United States as an example, note in the table below how the death rate has decreased (people lived longer) on average for the years 1900 to 1996. This same trend reflected in the table is now happening in every country in the world where a middle class is emerging.

FIGURE 1. Crude death rate* for infectious diseases — United States, 1900–1996†



*Per 100,000 population per year.

†Adapted from Armstrong GL, Conn LA, Pinner RW. Trends in infectious disease mortality in the United States during the 20th century. *JAMA* 1999;281:61–6.

‡American Water Works Association. Water chlorination principles and practices: AWWA manual M20. Denver, Colorado: American Water Works Association, 1973.

In my August 7, 2008 Commentary, “[Redistribution of Wealth, Part 2](#)” I wrote that as the largest poor nations develop their middle classes, the number of geniuses in the world will increase substantially and, I believe, the effect will be dramatic. In the past, individuals with genius would have been hampered in life by malnutrition, damaged by disease, or died young due to a low life expectancy where they were born. As the aggregate middle class of the world increases, more genius individuals will be healthier, live longer, and produce more useful products of their genius, whether those products are art, scientific discoveries, inventions, or scholarship. The rate of innovation for civilization will increase greatly. Instead of one Nicola Tesla there may be five; or six Mozarts instead one; or a dozen Steve Jobs. We will begin to see the flowering of mankind. Several outbreaks of genius like the Renaissance will likely occur.

The antichrist will be a genius capable of mobilizing other persons of genius to achieve their God-given talents for the benefit of humanity. The antichrist will be false, of course, a tyrant to be sure, but at the beginning he will portray himself as a Christ-like individual. That means he will exhibit, initially, most all the good qualities the Bible portrays Christ as having. He and his false prophet will preach 98 to 99% truth, with 1% strychnine poison. Remember, the goal of the antichrist is to seduce us to accept a false religion of works, culminating in keeping the Law of Moses. His goal is not to oppress us physically. He will never need to do that because public pressure will force people to conform to his false religion. All will go well for the world until the antichrist establishes his one-world religion and begins his oppression of Israel and invokes the tribulation. Jesus talks about this time:

“And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.”

• **Matthew 24:22**

“And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect’s sake, whom he has chosen, he has shortened the days.”

• *Mark 13:20*

Apocalyptic Ending?

The world will not end in a nuclear war as in fictional apocalyptic nightmares from popular culture of books, movies, television, and video games.¹⁶ Such a worldwide nuclear war will not occur. Here is a one-paragraph history of nuclear weapons development from 1945 to the present from George Friedman’s book *The Next Decade: Where We’ve Been ... and Where We’re Going* (New York: Doubleday, 2011) p. 82:

“Only one country ever produced a nuclear weapon from scratch, and that was the United States. The British got their nukes in compensation for their contribution to the American research effort. The French also acquired the technology from the Americans, which they then regifted to Israel. The Russians stole the knowledge from the Americans, then transferred it to both the Chinese and the Indians. The Chinese gave the technology to the Pakistanis. The point is, the development of these weapons through an independent research program is enormously difficult, which is why Iran is still struggling and North Korea has never gotten it quite right.”

Like Russia, Pakistan has helped the Iranians in the past with nuclear fuel technology and hardware. In the future, Pakistan will likely sell their technology and perhaps even nuclear weapons to Saudi Arabia, especially if Iran nears completion of its nuclear weapon and missile technology.

In a sense, there has already been the equivalent of an all-out nuclear exchange, but it was done over a period of 55 years. Have you forgotten? Between 1945 and 2000 over 700 nuclear weapons have been exploded above ground. Over 1,300 have been exploded underground during that same period. (My January 21, 2004 Commentary, “[A Future Nuclear War?](#)” will explain more.)¹⁷

No, civilization will not return to the stone age by the act of man. God will do so in judgment. That great destruction will not happen through actions of man. God’s judgment on mankind will be so complete that few people will remain alive. (I quoted the verses below on page 1, I emphasize different points of evidence):

“For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.”

• *Matthew 24:21–22*

“For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be. And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect’s sake, whom he has chosen, he has shortened the days.”

• *Mark 13:19–20*

The contexts of these passages are clear that this crisis will occur,

[1] after the Gospel is preached to all the world (not during, Matthew 24:14; Mark 13:10), and

[2] after the abomination of desolation begins (Matthew 24:15; Mark 13:14).

Nuclear war will not cause the destruction of the world or the death of most of mankind. It will be God’s judgment (see Isaiah chapters 13 and 34 for example). Between now and Christ’s return there may even be

¹⁶ My July 17, 2013 Commentary “[Apocalyptic Nightmares](#),” shows why a scenario of world-wide nuclear destruction is impossible without accounting for the biblical prophecies of God’s judgment and Christ’s return.

¹⁷ In the future Zechariah 14:12 will be fulfilled, but it will not be from nuclear weapons, even though descriptions appear to be like the effects of the blast and radiation of a nuclear weapon:

“And this shall be the plague wherewith YHWH will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth.”

isolated nuclear weapons used in anger, perhaps destroying cities. There may be small-scale nuclear wars between countries and groups, but there will be no post-apocalyptic world of survival due to a man-caused nuclear war that will end civilization. God has not prophesied such an event.

Time's Up ... Everybody Out of the Gene Pool!

Another important aspect of demography needs to be understood. God established a genetic degeneracy within the human race beginning with the first children from Adam. It limits mankind. The genetics of the human race is weakening through harmful mutations. This phenomena is called “genetic entropy.” Entropy is a process of degradation or running down, a trend to disorder and disorganization.

In his book *Genetic Entropy* (4th ed., FMS Publications, 2014), geneticist John Sanford explains how mankind has only a few generations (about 200 years or so) before no human children will be born. God has put an “expiration date” on the human race.

“What is Genetic Entropy? It is the genetic degeneration of living things. Genetic entropy is the systematic breakdown of the internal biological information systems that make life alive. Genetic entropy results from genetic mutations, which are typographical errors in the programming of life (life’s instruction manuals).

Mutations systematically erode the information that encodes life’s many essential functions. Biological information consists of a large set of specifications, and random mutations systematically scramble these specifications — gradually but relentlessly destroying the programming instructions essential to life.

... There is another level of genetic entropy that affects us as a population. Because mutations arise in all of our cells, including our reproductive cells, we pass many of our new mutations to our children. So mutations continuously accumulate in the population — with each generation being more mutant than the last.

[1] **So not only do we undergo genetic degeneration personally,**

[2] **we also are undergoing genetic degeneration as a population.**

This is essentially evolution going the wrong way. Natural selection can slow down, but cannot stop, genetic entropy on the population level.”

- **[Genetic Entropy website](#), accessed 7/15/2015
*underlines and brackets are mine***

This means that for each individual (including you and me) the genetic strength decreases with each cell division of every cell in your body. At the same time, the genetic viability of each generation decreases for the human population as a whole. These mutations are almost 100% damaging (and not beneficial) and causes decline for each individual accumulating with each new generation.

Increasing genetic mutation will eventually prevent successful reproduction at some time in the future. In other words, eventually human beings will be incapable of producing children. The human race is programmed to die out unless God intervenes. We know that God says He will intervene. The genetic regeneration will begin when Christ returns for all those surviving God’s judgment.¹⁸

Those of us in the first resurrection at Christ’s return will be immortal with spiritual bodies (1 Corinthians 15:50–55).

Genetic entropy applies to all living systems on earth, so far as can be known. This seems to be what the

¹⁸ My article “[Your Resurrection](#)” will explain the process of your resurrection and has several links to several of Dr. Martin’s excellent chapter from *Essentials of New Testament Doctrine* (quoted in small part below), “[Resurrections from the Dead](#).”

apostle Paul describes (even though he never thought in terms of “genetic entropy”):

“For I am reckoning that the sufferings of the current era do not deserve the glory about to be revealed for us.

For the premonition of the creation is awaiting the unveiling of the sons of God.

For to vanity was the creation subjected, not voluntarily, but because of Him [God] Who subjects it, in expectation that the creation itself, also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

For we are aware that the entire creation is groaning and travailing together until now. Yet not only so, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruit of the spirit, we ourselves also, are groaning in ourselves, awaiting the sonship, the deliverance of our body.”

• ***Romans 8:18–23, Concordant Literal Version***

Consider carefully what Paul points out in this passage:

- Creation was made subject to **“vanity.”**
- Creation is suffering from a **“slavery of corruption.”** This is a way of saying that creation is bound up in degeneration, a synonym of entropy.
- Creation is **“groaning and travailing together until now”** (even to our present time).
- **“We ourselves also are groaning”** (Christ’s body, the *ekklesia*) and continuing our physical corruption, waiting **“for the sonship, the deliverance of our body”** which is presently degenerating.

Each generation is genetically weaker than each previous generation. The human race has a built-in termination point. In other words, the human race will no longer be biologically viable. The effect will cascade. God put a genetically programmed termination put into the children of Adam by. It is the genetic equivalent of what Christ says in Matthew 24:22 and Mark 13:20 above.

Aftermath ... The Effects of Christ’s Return

Dr. Martin wrote about Christ’s rule toward the end of his comprehensive Chapter 16 of his comprehensive book, *Essentials of New Testament Doctrine*, [“Resurrections from the Dead.”](#)

“All those resurrected when Christ returns will experience the Kingdom phase of salvation, called in the New Testament ‘the age [or world] to come’ (John 18:36). That is when Christ begins to rule (Revelation 19:15). He will continue ruling through all future ages until He conquers all opposition to God and when death as the last enemy shall be destroyed (1 Corinthians 15:24–28). All those not resurrected at Christ’s Advent will NOT experience the Kingdom Phase of God’s salvation during the Millennium when Israel is exalted above the nations.

We who will be resurrected at the Second Advent will not be subject to the second death (or any death) in the future. Those resurrected at this time are all the Old Testament saints of God chosen to understand the truths of God that were given to them. It also includes all Israelites hoping to enjoy ‘the world to come’ (that is, the Age that we call the Millennium). They will live not only to enjoy the Kingdom Phase of God’s rule on earth (the ages of the Millennium and the Great White Throne Judgement), but they will live with Christ forever. This is a great salvation indeed.

During the Millennium, the Old Testament saints and the apostles are promised to govern the nations left after the disastrous conditions brought on the earth in association with Christ’s Second Advent. The apostles will sit on twelve thrones governing the tribes of Israel (Matthew 19:28). They will live through the Millennium with their prime inheritance on earth. We who are Gentiles, and especially those of us who know and understand the teachings of the Mystery (mentioned primarily in Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians), will inherit a heavenly kingdom along with the apostle Paul who was the apostle to the Gentiles (2 Timothy 4:17–18). Mortal

Israelites who remain on earth will be given a New Covenant (a New Marriage with God) for this period and it will last 1000 years.

The Millennium will begin with an asteroid hitting the earth (Revelation 18:21). This will leave only a few humans of the various races alive on earth. This destruction is described in detail in Isaiah chapter 24. All mercantile activities will cease on earth for 70 years and the earth will return to an undeveloped state for that period of time (Isaiah 23:17–18). Egypt will be so destroyed that for 40 years not even an animal will walk through the country (Ezekiel 29:8–16). Edom will be desolate for the whole Millennium (Isaiah 34) and so will the area of Babylon (Jeremiah 50–51). These destructions are a part of Christ's judgments on the nations (not individual humans) described in Matthew 25:31–46.

After 70 years into the Millennium, Israel will again develop into a high prosperity and rule the entire world for 930 years, the exact number of years that Adam lived (Isaiah chapters 11 & 12). Knowledge of God will be so abundant at that time that it will be like the waters covering the sea bottoms (Isaiah 11:9). Satan and his angels will be confined in prisons for the whole period (Isaiah 24:21–23; Revelation 20:2–3). Those who die in this age will be resurrected at the Telos (**'the end,'** 1 Corinthians 15:24–28)."

God will heal the land from the effects of His judgment upon the physical earth. So too He shall heal the genetics of the surviving children of Adam during the 1,000 year reign of Christ so they shall again live long lives similar to the times before the flood. One difference will be that seed time and harvest will be regular and dependable:

"... YHWH said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

• *Genesis 8:21–22*

This was spoken by God as a message of His covenant with Noah, who represented all mankind. God set the rainbow in the clouds (Genesis 9:9–17), as **"the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth"** (Genesis 9:17).

After Christ's return, mankind's genetics will be healed and long lives, similar to pre-flood longevity, will begin again:

"There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that has not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed."

• *Isaiah 65:20*

God can heal and extend the genetic vitality and lives of all who survive into the millennium, as he will heal the genetic vitality of those born during the 1,000-year rule of Christ. He will do so just as He extended the life of King Hezekiah of Judah in Isaiah chapter 38. After the millennium, during the great white throne judgment in New Jerusalem the restorative properties of the tree of life will be available to all who will go and eat (Revelation 22:2, 14). All bodily and mental abilities will trend back to the physical ideal of Adam and those before the flood.¹⁹

People are important to God, whether all 40 billion born from Adam to the consummation (who knows how many?), or one individual — you — made in the "image and likeness" of God. Jesus Christ has already redeemed all: **"he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:** (Ephesians 1:4).

David Sielaff, August 2015

¹⁹ My July 15, 2015 Commentary "[Thoughts about Babel](#)" discusses mankind's mental capabilities before the flood, as well as the origin of writing after the confusion of tongues.